

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 JIDDA 01199 181415Z

53

ACTION H-03

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FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3740

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY ROME

C O N F I D E N T I A L JIDDA 1199

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ETRD, OVIP, SA

SUBJECT: CODEL STEVENSON DISCUSSIONS WITH CROWN PRINCE

REF: JIDDA 0963 (NOTAL), STATE 025893 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: SENATOR STEVENSON HAD MOST INFORMATIVE VISIT WITH CROWN PRINCE. TWO HOUR MEETING COVERED BOYCOTT, MIDDLE EAST PEACE EFFORT, U.S. ROLE THEREIN, DIEGO GARCIA AND ARMS SALES TO SAUDI ARABIA. FAHD WAS FRIENDLY AND EXPANSIVE THROUGHOUT. END SUMMARY.

1. SENATOR STEVENSON HAD TWO HOUR MEETING WITH CRWON PRINCE FAHD ON FEB. 14 COVERING A VARIETY OF TOPICS. MEETING WAS CLEARLY MOST IMPORTANT OF SENATOR'S DISCUSSIONS IN SAUDI ARABIA (OTHER MEETINGS WILL BE SUMMED UP IN SEPTTEL). CROWN PRINCE WAS FRIENDLY AND EXPANSIVE. DURING 45 MINUTES OF MEETING, SECOND DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER PRINCE ABDULLA BIN ABD AL-AZIZ WAS PRESENT, CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 JIDDA 01199 181415Z

ALTHOUGH LATTER DID NOT PARTICIPATE IN CONVERSATION.

2. FAHD DID NOT APPEAR TERRIBLY INTERESTED IN DISCUSSING BILL ON BOYCOTT SPONSORED BY SENATOR STEVENSON. HE MORE OR LESS DISMISSED ISSUE BY SAYING THAT THESE SMALL PROBLEMS COULD BE WORKED OUT BY QUIET, PERSONAL CONTACTS BETWEEN U.S. OFFICIALS (INCLUDING CONGRESSMEN) AND OFFICIALS OF THE VARIOUS ARAB STATES. HE SEEMED VERY PLEASED THAT STEVENSON WAS GOING TO DAMASCUS AND URGED HIM TO EXPLORE THE SUBJECT AT LENGTH THERE. HE STRONGLY MADE THE POINT THAT HIGH VISIBILITY MEASURES (SUCH AS STEVENSON BILL) WERE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE AND WOULD NOT BE NEARLY AS EFFECTIVE AS QUIET DIRECT CONTACTS.

3. CROWN PRINCE SPENT MUCH TIME SAYING THAT ALL OF THESE DIFFERENCES, SUCH AS THE BOYCOTT ISSUE, COULD BE RESOLVED IF THE UNDERLYING ISSUE, THE ARAB/ISRAELI DISPUTE, WERE TO BE RESOLVED. ON HIS PREVIOUS POINT REGARDING DIRECT CONTACTS, HE SAID HE WISHED ALL U.S. OFFICIALS WOULD VISIT THE AREA, SPECIFICALLY INCLUDING ISRAEL, SO THAT THEY COULD MORE OBJECTIVELY VIEW THE ISSUES. HE REPEATED THE OFT-HEARD THEME THAT THE ARABS DID NOT ASK THE U.S. TO ABANDON ISRAEL; THEY MERELY HOPED FOR MORE OBJECTIVITY.

4. SEVERAL TIMES FAHD SAID THAT RIGHT NOW THE TIME IS RIPE TO MAKE ADDITIONAL PROGRESS TOWARD RESOLUTION OF THE MIDEAST PROBLEM. HE SAID SAUDI ARABIA HAD SUPPORTED SEC. KISSINGER AND HIS EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE PEACE, BUT HE, FAHD, WAS AFRAID THAT SOVIET UNION WOULD TRY TO PRE-EMPT U.S. AND UNDERMINE OUR EFFORTS. HE SAID USSR DOES NOT WISH U.S. SUCCEED IN THESE EFFORTS BECAUSE TO DO SO WOULD GIVE U.S. ADDED PRESTIGE AND INFLUENCE. THUS IT IMPERATIVE THAT ANOTHER U.S. INITIATIVE
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PAGE 03 JIDDA 01199 181415Z

BE LAUNCHED RIGHT NOW.

5. FAHD SAID THAT U.S. VETOS AT THIS TIME DO NOT REPEAT NOT BOTHER HIM MUCH. HE SAID THAT HE HAS BEEN TELLING OTHER ARAB LEADERS THAT BY SO DOING WE ARE BUILDING UP RESERVOIR OF CREDIT WITH ISRAEL THAT SHOULD ENABLE US TO APPLY ADDITIONAL PRESSURE TO CONVINCE ISRAEL THAT IT

IN HER INTEREST TO BE MORE REASONABLE AND FORTHCOMING. FAHD ACKNOWLEDGED THAT HE WAS AWARE OF THE PROBLEMS OF AN ELECTION YEAR, BUT HE URGED RESTRAINT IN RESPONDING TO ZIONIST PRESSURES, AND HE SAID HE DID NOT SEE WHY AN ELECTION YEAR SHOULD PREVENT U.S. FROM CONTINUING ITS EFFORTS FOR PEACE IN MIDEAST. HE SAID TO DO OTHERWISE WOULD BE EXTREMELY DANGEROUS.

6. STEVENSON ASKED FAHD WHAT SAUDI REACTION WOULD BE TO A PROPOSAL WHEREIN A MIDEAST PEACE CONFERENCE WOULD BE CALLED, AT GENEVA OR ELSEWHERE, TO WHICH PALESTINIANS WOULD NOT REPEAT NOT BE INVITED, BUT AT WHICH THE FIRST AGENDA ITEM WOULD BE THE REPRESENTATION OF THE PALESTINIANS. FAHD SAID IT WOULDN'T WORK. HE SAID HE WAS CONVINCED THE SYRIANS WOULD NOT REPEAT NOT ACCEPT SUCH A FORMULA. FURTHER, SINCE HUSSEIN HAS ACCEPTED THE MOROCCO CONFERENCE DECLARATION THAT PLO REPRESENTS THE PALESTINIANS, HUSSEIN PROBABLY WOULD FEEL HE COULD NOT ACCEPT SUCH A FORMULA. THIS WOULD LEAVE THE CONFERENCE A MEETING BETWEEN ISRAEL AND EGYPT, AND THAT WOULDN'T DO.

7. STEVENSON ASKED SAUDI OPINION OF U.S. PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH BASE AT DIEGO GARCIA TO COUNTER SOVIETS IN INDIAN OCEAN. FAHD STRONGLY REPLIED THAT U.S. MUST REPEAT MUST ESTABLISH BASE. HE SAID LIKE IT OR NOT U.S. STILL IN POSITION OF DEFENDER OF THE FREE WORLD. U.S. MUST ACCEPT THIS RESPONSIBILITY. HE SAID HE VERY DISAPPOINTED AT OUR REACTION IN ANGOLA. HE SAID HE DIDN'T CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 JIDDA 01199 181415Z

REALLY EXPECT U.S. TO INTERVENE DIRECTLY, BUT HE THOUGHT WE MIGHT HAVE BEEN ABLE TO CHANNEL MORE ASSISTANCE THROUGH OUR FRIENDS IN AFRICA.

8. THE MEETING CLOSED WITH A DIRECT AND EXPLICIT REQUEST BY FAHD THAT THE U.S. CONTINUE TO SUPPLY ARMS TO SAUDI ARABIA TO ENABLE IT TO DEFEND ITSELF AGAINST OUTSIDE AGGRESSION, SPECIFICALLY AGAINST NEIGHBORS TO THE NORTH AND SOUTH.
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